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Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7769th meeting
Tuesday, 13 September 2016, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Taula	(New Zealand)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Xu Zhongsheng
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Ms. Guéguen-Mohsen
	Japan	Mr. Akahori
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Arcia Vivas

Agenda

The situation in Libya

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Libya

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Libya to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Martin Kobler, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Martin Kobler, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, and Ambassador Ramlan Bin Ibrahim, Permanent Representative of Malaysia, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya.

I now give the floor to Mr. Kobler.

Mr. Kobler (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to wish a very joyous and blessed Eid Al-Adha to all those Muslims, and in particular to all Libyans. It is a day for reconciliation — a day to reunite in peace.

(*spoke in English*)

I would also like to congratulate New Zealand on presiding over the Security Council this month.

Since my last briefing to the Council (see S/PV.7706), the paradox of Libya has become more apparent. The country has a tremendous potential, immense natural resources and a young population eager to reshape its future. And yet, instead of making use of all these blessings, long lines of Libyan men and women wait in the heat in front of banks to withdraw their daily limit of 200 dinars — about $40 — to cover the rising costs of basic necessities.

Faced with few prospects for earning a livelihood, rampant insecurity and endemic corruption, the temptation for the young to leave the country or join armed groups can be overwhelming. This is not a foundation on which to build a stable country. It is high time that the Libyans join forces to urgently address the burning political, security and economic problems of Libya.

Given the military events of recent days I would like to briefly update the Council along the following four points: first, the worrying security situation; secondly, the political momentum created by the recent decision of the House of Representatives; thirdly, the need for national reconciliation; and fourthly, the failing economy.

With respect to the seed situation, on the eve of Eid Al-Adha, the fragile peace in Libya's oil crescent suffered a fierce blow when units of the Libyan National Army, under the command of General Khalifa Haftar, attacked the oil terminals and ports in the oil crescent area. This area was under the control of forces loyal to the Presidency Council. I was concerned that this might happen. This development will further hinder oil exports, deprive Libya of its only source of income, and increase the division of the country. This has to stop. Libyan natural resources belong to all Libyans. They must be protected and exported legally under the authority of the Presidency Council. Otherwise, Libya's citizens will pay the price.

I therefore called for an immediate cessation of hostilities and urged all parties to avoid inflicting any damage to the oil facilities. I also urged respect for resolution 2259 (2015), which recognizes the Presidency Council and the Government of National Accord as the sole executive authority of Libya. Differences must be resolved through dialogue, not military force. I have many times sought to engage with General Haftar to encourage him to embrace dialogue. However, my repeated attempts have so far been without success.

On a positive note, forces loyal to the Presidency Council made impressive progress towards ousting the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) from its last remaining stronghold in Libya, in Sirte. Very soon, ISIS will no longer hold territory in Libya. However, the terrorist threat in Libya and beyond will remain, and will require continued vigilance. I would like to pay tribute to the more than 500 brave Libyans who sacrificed their lives and the 2,500 who were injured in the fight against ISIS in Sirte. But importatly, my thoughts also go to the many thousands who fell while fighting the scourge of terrorism in other parts of Libya, in particular Benghazi.

I also want to thank those who supported the operation to rid Sirte of terrorism at the request of the Presidency Council, particularly the United States for its air support, which without any doubt has saved many lives, striking numerous car bombs before they reached their targets, and strengthened the Presidency Council's ability to defeat ISIS in Sirte. I would also like to thank those Member States that provided medical support, either in their territories or inside Libya. The fight against ISIS is a Libyan-led fight, but the defeat of ISIS in Libya benefits the entire region.

Now civilian and military authority needs to be established in Sirte and security restored. To this end, we convened a meeting with key ministers of the Government of National Accord last week to develop a plan after the liberation of Sirte. Reconstruction efforts in Sirte must be a model case for other places, such as Benghazi. The Council will recall my constant appeals for a reconstruction fund for Benghazi after security has been restored.

Libya remains a launch pad for thousands of migrants. This year alone, in this season, 112,000 migrants reached Italy's shores from Libya. Three thousand migrants drowned in the Mediterranean, and many more thousands died in the desert on their way. This senseless loss of so many human lives is simply unacceptable.

Both the fight against terrorism and the flow of migrants are symptoms of Libya's lack of unified and effective security institutions: institutions to secure Libya's borders, institutions to control the circulation of weapons, and institutions to break the criminal networks that prey on the vulnerable.

The security situation in Tripoli is still very fragile. In this context, I welcome the nomination of the commanders of the Presidential Guard. This is the first step towards bringing the new Libyan security units under the full authority of the Presidency Council.

On 5 August, we convened the first high-level security meeting of more than 50 key Libyan security actors to discuss proposals for improving security in Tripoli and in the country. However, further progress will be possible only if all Libyan security actors from east, west and south agree on a unified chain of command, with the Presidency Council as the Supreme Commander of the Libyan army. This requires the active engagement and commitment of the international community.

Let me now come to my second point: the political developments. The formation of an effective Government of National Accord is critical for the transition period in Libya. After months of political stalemate, the House of Representatives on 22 August decided to reject the current Government of National Accord. Nevertheless, this decision is a new opening for the Presidency Council to solicit the endorsement of a unity Government.

Efforts must now be exerted to ensure that the House of Representatives and the Presidency Council work together towards meeting this important milestone. In this regard, the role of the Libyan Political Dialogue has remained relevant. Since my most recent report to the Council, I have convened the Libyan Political Dialogue twice to create additional political space and leverage so as to forge a way through the political impasse. Although there are differences of opinion on the Libyan Political Agreement, even critics and opponents recognize its framework and its value. It remains the only way forward in Libya's transition. There is no alternative.

Here I would like to thank Member States for their unity and support for the Libyan Political Agreement, in particular their strong support for the Presidency Council. It is, however, vital that this political support also be reflected by practice on the ground by all in Libya and outside. Parallel Libyan institutions not coming under the Government of National Accord shall not be supported; red carpets should not be rolled out for them.

During the most recent meeting of the Libyan Political Dialogue last week, on 5 and 6 September, the following lines were discussed and a political way forward was suggested.

First, the Presidency Council should seize the opportunity created by the return of the two boycotting members to become an effective institution. All members should now agree on a revised list of Government ministers. I welcome the intention of the Presidency Council to consult with the main Libyan stakeholders, and I reiterate my request to reserve 30 per cent of the posts for women.

Secondly, the House of Representatives should meet with all of its members in an atmosphere free of intimidation to discuss the constitutional amendment and the endorsement of the Government of National Accord. I will continue to encourage all members of

the House of Representatives, including the boycotters, to join the sessions.

I also call for the presence of Libyan and international observers during these crucial sessions, let us say from the League of Arab States and others, during these crucial sessions of the House of Representatives.

I urge all political actors to truly show statesmanship, leadership and cohesion for the sake of Libyan men, women and children, who just want to have their lives back.

I come to my third point: the question of national reconciliation. On 31 August, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya kick-started a round of discussions with Libyan and international experts on national reconciliation. This is but the small first step of a process leading towards healing the wounds of the past. We should help the Libyans find in themselves the willingness to forgive and overcome the past, and to build a new future together. No reconciliation will succeed if the next generation does not actively participate. Seventy per cent of the population is under the age of 35, and this key part of society must be given a voice and be able to shape Libya's future. Brain drain is a serious problem for Libya.

One inspiring example of reconciliation I would like to mention is the agreement signed between the representatives of the cities of Misrata and Tawergha on 31 August, two weeks ago. The agreement is the product of months of courageous and determined efforts by the two parties, facilitated by our Human Rights Division, and I want to congratulate all involved. I am happy that after many years, the internally displaced will finally be able to start returning to their homes before the end of the year. This agreement should give hope to all 435,000 internally displaced people in the country.

I come to my last and often neglected point: the economic situation. All our efforts can succeed only if the Libyans address the country's growing economic crisis. Libya is a resource-rich country, but its economy is on the road to collapse. Oil production is at its lowest point ever, with only about 200,000 barrels per day compared with 1.4 million barrels even after the revolution. Government spending on salaries and subsidies is at 93 per cent of its total budget, and 1.6 million out of 6 million Libyans — more than one person per family — are on the payroll of the Central Bank. The country is running a 75 per cent budget deficit.

All this has resulted in the imposition of strict capital controls and a lack of liquidity. Libyans are frustrated that they cannot access their own money and that their currency is rapidly losing its value. The fundamentals of the economy need to be urgently addressed. Libya will not be able to rely for long on its foreign reserves. The war economy must give way to the economy of peace. Oil production must resume, and expenditure must be commensurate with the needs of the country. To do so, it is imperative that the pipelines open, Libyan financial institutions become unified and a national budget be approved.

Libya is at a crossroads. While political space has opened and progress is being made in the fight against terrorism, the political divisions underlying the conflict are deepening. Today more than ever, strong action is needed to convince Libyan stakeholders to build institutions that are open, participatory and able to address the needs of all of its citizens.

Finally, allow me to say thank you to a dear colleague who is leaving the Mission, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ali Al-Za'tari, for his distinguished service as the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Libya. I always appreciated his insightful analysis and his consistent and resolute advocacy for protecting the weak and vulnerable in Libyan society. I wish him the best of luck in facing the extremely difficult challenges as part of his new duties as Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Syria.

I look forward to the ministerial meeting on Libya to be held on 22 September on the margins of the General Assembly to demonstrate the cohesion and determination of the international community in helping Libyans to consolidate the gains achieved so far, but also to address the burning questions.

The President: I thank Mr. Kobler for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Ibrahim.

Mr. Ibrahim (Malaysia): In accordance with paragraph 24 (e) of Security Council resolution 1970 (2011), of 26 February 2011, I have the honour to report to the Security Council on the work of the Committee established pursuant to the same resolution. The report covers the period from 7 June to 14 September 2016. The Committee dealt with a number of issues during the reporting period via the silence procedure, which I will enumerate in chronological order.

On 15 June, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs submitted to the Committee a notification under the arms embargo pursuant to paragraph 13 (b) of resolution 2009 (2011), in relation to which the Committee did not take a negative decision.

On 7 July, the Committee received a letter from the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts on Libya, conveying its contribution to the report requested by resolution 2292 (2016), on the threat posed to Libya and neighbouring countries, including off the coast of Libya, by foreign terrorist fighters. The report reflecting the Panel's input has since been published as document S/2016/627.

The Committee received another letter from the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts on 14 July, proposing updates to the Committee's implementation assistance notice number 3. In the light of the adoption of resolution 2292 (2016), the Committee subsequently, on 18 August, updated that notice, which relates to the reporting of detections of attempted or actual violations of the arms embargo and the disposal of embargoed material.

The Committee received a letter from the Permanent Representative of Libya to the United Nations on 15 July, informing the Committee about the focal point pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2278 (2016). On 28 July, the Committee acknowledged that information and invited the focal point to brief the Committee on the elements set out in that paragraph.

On 18 August, the Committee received an implementation report pursuant to paragraph 25 of resolution 1970 (2011) from the Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations.

On 23 August, the Committee approved a request for the extension of a travel ban exemption for an additional six months. In that connection, let me note that both the implementation report and information on the granted travel ban exemption can be found on the website of the Committee.

Finally, on 29 August, the Committee received a notification under the assets freeze measure, pursuant to paragraph 19 (a) of resolution 1970 (2011), to which it did not object.

The President: I thank Mr. Ibrahim for his briefing.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.25 p.m.